



Relevance in the classroom; preparedness in the workplace

Students@Work is an initiative of First Gentleman Robert Eaves in partnership with the North Carolina Business Committee for Education. The goal is to challenge North Carolina businesses to offer job shadowing opportunities to middle school students in their community.

“Continuing success in business demands planning for the future and right now future employees and customers are sitting in a classroom. Job shadowing is a unique opportunity to demonstrate the connection between education and the workplace. There are significant benefits to both businesses and students when learning is a real world experience.”—**Robert Eaves**, *First Gentleman*

BENEFITS

Businesses:

- ◆ Promote career awareness and engage students who may be potential employees
- ◆ Enhance communication and goodwill between business and community
- ◆ Connect educators and students with business people in work environments
- ◆ Demonstrate value of community service by senior management and reignite passion for public service
- ◆ Provide leadership, writing, and organizational opportunities for employees beyond routine job descriptions
- ◆ Form mentoring relationships outside workplace

Students:

- ◆ Promote career awareness and opportunities
- ◆ Connect with business people in work environments
- ◆ Internalize the knowledge and skills that 21st century workplaces demand
- ◆ Extend connection of academics to real world of work

Why middle school?

Middle school is a crucial time for dropout prevention and also when high school curriculum planning takes place. Direct experience with the workplace demonstrates the relevance of education to future success.

“Each year Golden Corral sponsors Job Shadowing for over one hundred students at company and franchise restaurants across the country. This first-hand experience allows students to see how the skills they are learning in school relate to our Restaurant Manager’s job. It is also a great way for them to learn about the rewarding opportunities available in the food service industry and specifically at Golden Corral.”—**Dale Whitworth**, *Vice President and Controller, Golden Corral Corporation*

ACTION PLAN FOR JOB SHADOWING

Step 1: *Lay Groundwork*

- ◆ Obtain senior management endorsement and designate point person to set logistics, determine budget, and assemble material for participants
- ◆ Determine possible dates and size of group business can accommodate
- ◆ Recruit volunteers

Step 2: *Contact middle school with job shadowing opportunities* (*find middle schools in your community at www.ncreportcards.org*)

- ◆ School selects students and educators for participation
- ◆ School provides transportation and obtains necessary release forms
- ◆ Business communicates expectations for dress and behavior to school leadership

Step 3: *Business sets agenda*. Key components:

- ◆ CEO, President/Senior Executives welcome and address group emphasizing academic expectations, giving overview of business product/purpose
- ◆ One-to-one job shadowing timeframe (2 to 4 hours) should be gender matched. Students and educators should experience a true day in the life of the workplace
- ◆ Lunch—with presentation by appropriate business leader, again emphasizing need for education and connections between academics and future success. Time for questions and answers.
- ◆ Tour of workplace

Can't bring students into your workplace?

Bring your experiences to the classroom. Schools are happy to arrange for visitors and will help plan career day activities.

Step 4: *Develop Message for Students*. This will guide your employees during their interaction with students.

- ◆ Set expectation of the workplace, giving "Words of Wisdom" related to education, language, dress, personal responsibility, and the knowledge and skills necessary in work environment
- ◆ Take education seriously to become a potential employee
- ◆ Connect academic coursework to position
- ◆ Be prepared to become a life-long learner

Step 5: *Provide feedback*. Contact the First Gentleman at robert.eaves@nc.gov and let him know about your experience.

"Fulfilling the potential every child has to succeed and achieve something great requires both hope for today and a vision for the future. AT&T strongly supports job shadowing initiatives because they help students make the connection between their interests and talents with potential careers. It also opens doors to success and opportunity giving students a sneak preview of the wonderful future that awaits them. Our hope is that all businesses in North Carolina will invest in the future of our young people. We have been enhanced by their presence in the workplace."

--**Cynthia Marshall**, President, AT&T North Carolina



For more information about job shadowing and other ways that businesses can support education contact:

North Carolina Business Committee for Education
Office of the Governor
www.ncbce.org